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The situation in the Middle East

Question of Palestine

Security Council
Sixty-third year

Letter dated 29 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In my capacity as Chair of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement, I have the honour to transmit herewith a statement of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement on the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem, adopted on Friday, 29 February 2008 (see annex).

The Non-Aligned Movement strongly condemns the continuing military assaults by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, which, since the beginning of the month of February, have resulted in the killing of 76 Palestinians, including 13 children. The Non-Aligned Movement reiterates once again that the aggressive and violent escalation by Israel against the Palestinian people constitutes a grave breach of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, fuels the cycle of violence and threatens international peace and security as well as the fragile peace process between the two sides.

Furthermore, I kindly request that the present letter and its annex be circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 17 and 18, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Rodrigo **Malmierca Díaz**
Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations
Chair of the Coordinating Bureau
of the Non-Aligned Movement

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Annex to the letter dated 29 February 2008 from the Permanent Representative of Cuba to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Statement of the Coordinating Bureau of the Non-Aligned Movement on the situation in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem

The members of the Non-Aligned Movement express their grave concern over the Israeli aggressive escalation against the Palestinian people and the serious deterioration of the situation on the ground in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, particularly in the Gaza Strip.

The members of the Non-Aligned Movement strongly condemn the continuing military assaults by Israel, the occupying Power, against the Palestinian civilian population in the Gaza Strip, which, since the beginning of the month of February, have resulted in the killing of 76 Palestinians, including 13 children. Such violent and illegal actions have deepened the suffering of innocent and defenceless Palestinians in the Gaza Strip, who are already greatly suffering from continued imposition of the crippling Israeli siege and the ensuing humanitarian crisis. Moreover, this violent military escalation by Israel constitutes a grave breach of international law, including humanitarian and human rights law, fuels the cycle of violence and threatens international peace and security as well as the fragile peace process between the two sides.

The Non-Aligned Movement calls upon the international community, especially the Security Council, to uphold international law and its responsibilities and to act urgently to address this growing crisis. Israel, the occupying Power, is called upon to immediately cease its violations and to abide by all of its obligations under international law and relevant United Nations resolutions as the occupying Power in the Occupied Palestinian Territory, including East Jerusalem.

The Non-Aligned Movement reaffirms its support for and solidarity with the Palestinian people during this critical period. Moreover, it reaffirms its long-standing principled positions calling, inter alia, for an end to the Israeli occupation of the Palestinian and other Arab lands occupied since 1967, the realization of the right of the Palestinian people to self-determination and the establishment of their independent State of Palestine, with East Jerusalem as its capital. The Non-Aligned Movement expresses the hope that the current dangerous deterioration of the situation will be halted and that positive developments on the ground will be generated to help advance the peace process towards the achievement of these goals and a just, lasting and comprehensive peace.

New York, 29 February 2008